

February 7, 2023

Re: Oppose HB 6590 and HB 9593

To: Members of the CT General Assembly Housing Committee:

I am a resident of Fairfield Connecticut, an attorney who practices real estate law, and a founding member of FairPLAN, an environmental advocacy group, and an elected member of Fairfield's Plan and Zoning Commission. I write as an individual, to oppose the following bills, which serve to diminish local land development control and the ability of Towns and cities to self-govern:

H.B. No. 6590 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN PROTECTIONS FOR GROUP AND FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES.

H.B. No. 6593 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HOUSING AUTHORITY JURISDICTION.

HB6590 removes from a town's Plan & Zoning Commission its ability to consider criteria normally considered to ensure that developments can be handled by the existing infrastructure, and pose no adverse impacts to the local community. HB9593 enables one municipality's housing authority to expand into another by establishing and operating public housing projects, reducing a municipality's ability to self-govern.

These bills, like others before it, would degrade the benefits of local zoning authority, which enables Towns and cities to plan in a manner that maintains an orderly pace of development, considers uniquely local criteria and factors, protects open space and natural and historic resources, retains property values, and ensures that the Town is a desirable place in which to live or operate a business.

Land use decision making, unlike almost any other type of governmental action, is uniquely dependent on very local characteristics, nearby natural resources, aging infrastructure and the nearby built environment.

That is why it's critical that all land use stakeholders be involved in drafting these bills – but it doesn't seem as if there was adequate outreach to local communities on these bills- I only heard about this a couple days ago.

There is likely a bill that could accomplish the goals this committee seeks without eviscerating municipal zoning but you need to hear from all sides. I urge this committee to bring a broader array of land use interest groups into the mix by focusing outreach on more than just development interests and housing advocates.

Please do not approve these bills or similar ones unless and until you have sought out input from all sides of the land-use discussion.

Please vote no.

Sincerely,
Kathryn L. Braun, Fairfield Resident